

The King's English

The King's English is a book on English usage and grammar. It was written by the brothers Henry Watson Fowler and Francis George Fowler and was published in 1906;^[1] it thus pre-dates by 20 years *Modern English Usage*, which was written by Henry alone after Francis's death in 1917.

The King's English is less like a dictionary than *Modern English Usage*; it consists of longer articles on more general topics such as vocabulary, syntax, and punctuation and draws heavily on examples from many sources throughout. One of its sections is a systematic description of the appropriate uses of *shall* and *will*. The third and last edition was published in 1931, by which time *Modern English Usage* had superseded it in popularity.

Because all living languages continually evolve, the book is now considered outdated in some respects, and some of the Fowlers' opinions about correct English usage are at times seen as antiquated (yet not incorrect) with regard to contemporary standards. For example, the Fowlers disapprove of the word "concision" on the grounds that it had a technical meaning in theology, "to which it may well be left"; but "concision" is now a common synonym for "conciseness". The Fowlers also criticised the use of *standpoint* and *just how much* (as in "Just how much more of this can we take?"), describing them as undesirable "Americanisms", but both are now common in British English. The book nevertheless remains a benchmark for usage, and is still in print.

Contents

Notes

See also

References

External links

Notes

1. *King's English* (<https://archive.org/details/kingsenglish00fowlrich/page/n3>) (2nd ed.). Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. 1906. Retrieved 25 November 2019 – via Internet Archive.

See also

- Hart's Rules
- Received Pronunciation

References

- Henry Fowler, Frank Fowler, Matthew Parris (Introduction). *The King's English* (*Oxford Language Classics Series*). Oxford University Press. ISBN 0-19-860507-2.

External links

- The full text of the second, 1908, edition is available online at: <http://www.bartleby.com/116/>

-  Works related to The King's English at Wikisource
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